

## **Visual Artist Jill Foote-Hutton: Interactive collaborative ceramic installation**

As a clay artist, Jill is the 2011 recipient of the Jessie Wilber and Frances Senska Individual Artist Award established by a private gift to the arts council from Stacy Hamm and Sage Walden.

Jill Foote-Hutton writes about her artistry, "The act of storytelling through images and words is an active and communal process. It is my goal to engage a viewing audience by providing a simple platform to pique their imagination: a chalkboard ground with fantastic figures floating in the black space. What begins as open black space is quickly filled by the audience with their stories and their images, the availability and potential of chalk whispering, "Take hold and make your mark," is too much to resist. Relationships between the figures on the ground take shape and just as quickly change with the addition of information. The gallery walls become a contemporary and ephemeral palimpsest."

In response to the issue of artistic innovation, she states, "The Communal Narrative Series of work is indeed an innovation in my practice, as it feels (at last) as though the majority of my concepts, inspirations and efforts have come together in a cohesive amalgamation. Many ceramists list the need to have interaction or engagement with their audience before the mug/bowl/plate is valid as a utilitarian object. .. Past bodies of work have sought after audience collaboration, but too often the path was too convoluted to allow for any real exchange of ideas between audience and artist.

"...between audience and artist." This is where the innovation happens for me. I want the line between the two to eventually disappear. At the very least I want it to greatly blur.

"The gift I receive in return is in the harvesting of the stories. The stories and images find their way onto my series of narrative vessels, completing a cycle of creative dialogue. Also within the narrative vessel series is the realization of many contemporary influences. Many functional ceramists look to painting and some even look to woodcuts, but the illustrational style of these vessels is born of a love of Letterpress, graphic novels and contemporary puppetry."

In Jill's work the panel saw innovation in all aspects of the ceramic form. They felt she is engaging an audience in a way that relates to the idea of community and communal use beyond just a reference to a vessel. They saw her work as outrageous, playful, formally aware yet intentionally rebellious. They were drawn to her use of social networking and imaginary worlds. They felt her work breaks the aesthetic standards of functional, formal ceramics and is exciting in terms of her relationship with her audiences.

